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General Assembly
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Official Records

110th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 17 April 1996, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Freitas do Amaral . . . . . (Portugal)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Reyn (Belgium), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda item 12 (*continued*)

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Report of the Secretary-General (A/50/847)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance on its twelfth meeting (A/50/525)

Letter from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the President of the General Assembly (A/50/926)

Draft resolution (A/50/L.69)

The Acting President: This afternoon the Assembly will continue its plenary meetings devoted to public administration and development.

I call on the Permanent Representative of Guyana.

Mr. Insanally (Guyana): We have all come to realize that effective and efficient public administration is a key element in the promotion of development. My Government is therefore pleased to see that it is being accorded such high priority in the deliberations of the General Assembly. We welcome the opportunity afforded us to participate in this debate.

In recent years there has been a marked tendency to diminish the importance of public administration. This accompanied the belief that more things could be left to the magic hand of the market. In some quarters it even became fashionable to see government as a problem, to denounce big government. We have also seen a tendency on the part of some aid donors and creditor agencies to seek to diminish or to minimize the functions of the local public administration in developing countries, either by urging that many areas of responsibility be relinquished altogether or by seeking to bypass the administration. They prefer to deal directly with the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

This may be the result of a tendency to set up a false dichotomy between private enterprise and public administration. It should be clear to all who study the history of industrialized countries, and that of the newly industrialized countries, that economic progress is due both to good public administration and to individual initiative which good Governments have actively facilitated and fostered. No country has made economic progress without positive stimulus from good Governments. This has been understood since the 1960s, when the United Nations began its important work in support of public administration, particularly in new States.

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This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one month of the date of the meeting*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

In recent years there has been something of a reaction to what had been perceived as excessive or inefficient participation by some Governments in public life. We believe the time has come for us to have a better understanding of the contribution of public administration, particularly for economic growth. We hope that the debate this week will help provide understanding of the proper contribution of public administration in the 1990s. In this regard, we are considerably helped by the various reports before the Assembly at this meeting, including the Secretary General's report contained in document A/50/847 and the report of the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance on its twelfth meeting.

Good public administration operates in many ways that are relevant to economic growth. As has been said, it is the steel frame on which the edifice of development is constructed. Public services have the first and foremost responsibility for the maintenance of law and order. It is now generally agreed that economic development occurs only in societies where there is rule of law, where contracts are upheld, where legal agreements are fully enforceable within the system and where, as a consequence, entrepreneurs — both local and foreign — can confidently invest. For this a public administration system which provides and maintains a transparent and impartial system of law and which is utterly predictable represents a firm basis for development. That role cannot be privatized; neither can the role of providing order for the peace and safety of persons and of society. The whole State must be covered by effective courts and competent police forming part of an efficient administration.

To these basic functions must be added, particularly in developing countries, an ever growing list of services providing infrastructure — such as roads and airports — education, public health and protection for the environment. In this context, Guyana recently participated in the Interregional Seminar on the Role of Public Administration in Developing Infrastructure and Protecting the Environment, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 6 March to 8 March 1996. Sustainable development of our national resources remains a vital issue for us.

Although still insufficiently developed in many developing countries, the question of appropriate research capacity needs to be carefully addressed. In developing countries much more attention needs to be given to this. As an example, consider the role to be played by public services in overcoming health deficiencies in society — such as measures to improve nutrition or to reduce debilitating disease — which can considerably aid in increasing productivity and thus further development.

As a country which is itself in the throes of economic and social reconstruction and in the promotion of people-centred development, Guyana recognizes the importance of a strong and effective public administration. My Government is committed to the development of an administration at both the central and regional levels. Important also is the management of the process of decentralization between the central Government and the administration of the 10 administrative regions that make up our country, and of coordination between individual agencies of government. To ensure sound management, we have taken steps to strengthen public administration through the rationalization and consolidation of public sector resources, public sector institutional reform and enhanced social sector performance, particularly in education.

It goes without saying that education is essential to modernization and development. Proper management of primary, secondary and tertiary education is required in order to turn out educated and skilled manpower. In this context, it is important to underline the need for special efforts in educational research to promote development. My Government fully recognizes that good public services require an appropriate share of the national income, and it is progressively increasing the investment necessary for providing all vital social services.

Very few Governments today, either developed or developing, are as free of corruption as they would like to be. It is clear that corruption is a serious obstacle to economic progress. We learn from the history of developed countries, which were notorious for corruption in the nineteenth century, that a great improvement in behaviour came about only when there was a change in public opinion and when civil servants began to be accorded the importance which their role demands. We must take all necessary steps to arrest corruption in public service everywhere so as to ensure the highest standards of performance.

My own Government continues to stress accountability and transparency in our efforts to eliminate corruption, and we have now established an Integrity Commission. In so doing, we have provided an environment for a new culture of ethics in the public service, with honesty and dedication as the driving

forces. Additionally, Guyana recently initialled in Caracas the inter-American convention against corruption.

Finally, I wish to stress that public administration in developing countries must adopt a kind of pioneering and promotional role to invite and facilitate industry, to encourage participation in foreign trade, to facilitate the provision of credit to farmers and businessmen, to foster new manufacturers and technologies, and so on. Governments in developing countries cannot afford to take a *laissez-faire* attitude. One must overcome negative stereotyping of the public service. Effective public administration is a great asset to any country — particularly to one that is on the path to development.

Thus, we are committed to providing suitable conditions to attract the best and the brightest to the civil service. It used to be the case in many developing countries, such as my own, that the public service attracted young men and women of remarkable ability, and, indeed, the United Nations later became one of the beneficiaries in this context. We have had many top national civil servants from developing countries who rendered great service as staff members of the United Nations. Today we look to the United Nations and its agencies, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to assist us in rebuilding our weakened administrative structures and to improve our systems of national governance.

I would like to pay tribute in this regard to UNDP and to the United Nations Division of Public Administration and Development Management, which have always supported efforts to upgrade the expertise and professionalism of civil servants in our countries. The Division's advisory services, its seminars and publications and its fellowships to young cadres have all been of inestimable value to many nations such as ours. The Division discharges one of the most important functions of the United Nations, together with UNDP, and their efforts deserve to be appreciated and supported by this Assembly.

In conclusion, I would also like to encourage donor countries to share more of their experience of modern public administration. This can be done through technology transfer and by assisting with new skills, such as increased use of electronic data processing, as well as improved working methods and forms of organization.

Helping developing countries improve their services through consultation and support for training and development institutions remains a very cost-effective form of international assistance, and it is an excellent way — albeit an indirect one — to promote human development.

The need for capacity-building in public administration cannot be overemphasized. Developing countries such as mine will continue to need the support of the international community for their efforts to adapt their public machinery to the new demands which face us today.

The Acting President: I now call on the Deputy Permanent Representative of Egypt.

Mr. Awaad (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Public administration is one of the main pillars of development. In addition, it is the principal means by which government responds to the wishes and desires of peoples. Hence, the delegation of Egypt studied with great interest the report of the United Nations Secretary-General on public administration and development, as well as the report of the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance.

In this connection, we would like to thank sisterly Morocco for its initiative based on the adoption of the Tangier Declaration at the Pan-African Conference of Ministers of the Civil Service, held in 1994.

Today's world is undergoing many intense, rapid and complex transformations at the social, economic and political levels. There are many challenges facing the process of development, such as the need to eliminate poverty, to achieve sustainable social and economic development, to enhance economic globalization, to protect and preserve our environment, to control rapid population growth and to find work opportunities for the increasing number of young people.

All this undoubtedly burdens State administrative organs, which must make rapid and constant adaptations to new variables in order to find the necessary solutions to old and new problems alike. In this context, I should like to outline Egypt's fundamental efforts in recent years to repair the State's administrative organs.

In 1991 the Egyptian Government began implementation of a comprehensive programme for economic reform. The main elements of the programme are, first, limiting the role played by the State in the process of production, a role that was expanded in the 1950s and 1960s. How the shift from public to private assets has started. Secondly, the private sector is

encouraged to enhance its role in investment and production, since this is the main pillar of economic growth. The third element is the reduction of the State's budget deficit by making allocations in line with the new trends. Fourth is the reduction of inflation. The fifth element is the reduction of payment deficits, the gradual reduction of tariffs and the gradual elimination of non-tariff barriers to imports.

The implementation of this programme requires the State administrative organs to be refocused mainly on indicative planning and programmes, on paving the way economically for development and growth, and on creating a suitable legal environment in which the private sector can work. It must also concentrate more on the collection and analysis of data. This ambitious programme for economic reform and structural adjustment has necessitated a move away from public administration and towards privatization. This has led to a reduction in the budget deficit, which is now less than 2.6 per cent.

To satisfy the requirements of the new role of public administration, the Egyptian Government has, first, established a new Ministry for administrative development, whose main task is to control the State's reform plan for administrative organs by studying the feasibility of current government structures. Its tasks also include preventing duplication of work, enhancing the quality of the work, coordinating the activities of government organs and looking into the best ways to make use of these State administrative organs.

Additionally, the Egyptian Government has taken into consideration that the refocusing of the State administrative organs will not result in its having a more passive role in providing social services, and this should not hamper market mechanisms. The Government has adopted unconventional solutions. In confronting unemployment, it has established a social development fund independent of the government administration. Its role is not to create new job opportunities, as had not happened in the past. It also tries to assist young people in starting new micro-projects and tries to subsidize successful small and medium-sized projects, since they use more manpower.

One of the most salient challenges for the State administrative organ in its new role to face problem of overpopulation and to establish an organ independent of the government administration for work in the field of family planning. This should continue to be carried out effectively and without the creation of new levels of bureaucracy.

A new role for government administration has also emerged in the technology of communications and data collection. A new unit, part of the office of the Prime Minister, has been established. Through it a pragmatic programme providing the central and local government with this technology has been implemented, thus, avoiding a new central bureaucracy. This unit has evolved into a successful information centre occupying a distinguished place in the Middle East and in the developing world.

We have also concentrated on the training of higher administrative leadership and government employees. This will enhance the quality of government performance. A centre has been established to prepare leaders in the field of public administration.

The United Nations has a cardinal role in the field of public administration and development, dating back to 1948, when the International Centre for Training in Public Administration was established. The United Nations programme in public administration and finance helps many developing countries whose economies are in a state of transition; in addition, a considerable role is played by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Our intention is not simply to enumerate the activities of the Organization in the field of public administration, but rather to study, comparatively and otherwise, the means of enhancing its activities, particularly in exchanges of expertise and information between States.

Despite the differences between the circumstances of various developing countries, a general trend can be noted: democracy and market economies are being utilized for economic and social reforms. The success of this trend, along with the enhancement of public administration and the achievement of development, will depend on our recognition of the indispensable role of public administration in this endeavour. In addition, it will depend on the ability of the international community — the United Nations, donor countries and development agencies — to support the efforts of developing countries in these fields and to mobilize the necessary financial resources.

The Acting President: I should like to inform the Assembly that the representative of Benin has requested to participate in the debate on this item. Inasmuch as the list of speakers was closed on Monday, 15 April, at

5 p.m., may I ask the Assembly whether there is any objection to the inclusion of that delegation in the list of speakers.

I hear none. Benin is therefore included in the list.

I now call on Mr. J. Chiteyeye, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Finance of Malawi.

Mr. Chiteyeye (Malawi): On behalf of my delegation, I wish to thank you, Mr. Acting President, for giving us this opportunity to participate in this important discussion on public administration and development. We believe that there is indeed an urgent need for creating public administration systems that can effectively respond to the many challenges that our Governments face today around the globe, particularly in Africa.

In the case of Malawi, we have over the past three decades or so implemented a number of development programmes aimed at raising the standard of living of the people in our country. As a result of implementing the programmes, some gains were made, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s, when we attained impressive economic growth rates at the national level.

Despite these gains, the incidence of poverty has remained severe and widespread. A good proportion of our people in Malawi still live under conditions of absolute poverty. It is against this background that the Government of Malawi has adopted poverty alleviation as its central theme for development. At this time we are carrying out reforms at grass-roots, district and national levels in order to create systems that will assist the Government in implementing the poverty alleviation programme. We are also redefining the Government's role in view of the growing role of the private sector, non-governmental organizations, local authorities and local communities in the development process.

In addition, the Government is currently facing serious financial problems which have, in turn, forced us to implement drastic public expenditure controls. The Government is therefore increasingly playing a coordinating role rather than the traditional role of producing goods and services.

At the grass-roots level, we are, with the assistance of the World Bank, training and empowering local communities to implement and manage their own development programmes. The Government's role in this project is to mobilize resources, both locally and from the donor community. The mobilized resources are then provided directly to local communities for construction of infrastructure, such as schools, health centres and water schemes. The implementation of these programmes is the responsibility of the local communities, with the facilitation of private companies, non-governmental organizations and local authorities where necessary. The maintenance of the infrastructure is also the responsibility of the local communities. The communities are further held accountable for the resources that the Government is providing.

At the district level, most programmes are still being implemented by the central Government through sectoral ministries. A decision has, however, been made to strengthen the capacity of the district councils so that they can fully take on the tasks of planning and implementing development programmes at that level. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is playing a very crucial role in the implementation of the decentralization programme, which is aimed at bringing the devolution of responsibility to the local people in the districts.

At the national level, the Government is implementing public service reforms that will help not only in the implementation of the poverty alleviation programme, but also in responding to the many demands that are being placed on the Government by the general public for the provision of social, economic and political stability, transparency and full respect for human rights.

The Assembly is aware that Malawi, like many other countries in Africa, has recently undergone a dramatic political transformation from a one-party system to a multi-party democracy. The United Nations has played a crucial role in this process, for which the people of Malawi are very grateful.

However, this political change has created great expectations for improvements in the delivery of goods and services by the Government. In addition, ordinary people today expect to participate fully in decision-making and in the implementation of development programmes. The Government is therefore implementing reforms in the public service in order to respond to these complex demands.

These reforms are aimed at achieving the following objectives: first, to improve the Government's ability to attract and retain a sufficient number of properly trained Malawians to meet professional and specialized

manpower needs; and, secondly, to improve the morale, motivation and work ethic of civil servants through proactive measures, such as the regular review and rationalization of pay and benefits schemes.

The Government of Malawi recognizes that reform is a continuous process which requires a clear strategic plan. To this end, the Government has formulated a Civil Service Reform Action Plan which, among other things, includes the following: first, the establishment of a personnel information and control system that links personnel data to payroll data, on the basis of the results of a civil service census which we recently carried out; secondly, the identification of overlapping Government functions that are currently being carried out by different agencies and that in the future will either be eliminated or merged; thirdly, the identification of those government functions that will be privatized or contracted to the private sector; and, fourthly, the restructuring of the salary structure, on the basis of the results of a comprehensive job evaluation exercise.

In order to ensure the sustainability of the reform programme that we are implementing, the Government of Malawi is implementing these reforms in close collaboration with trade unions and other interested parties.

Finally, the Malawi Government has fully recognized the important role that the private sector is playing as the engine of economic development. The Government has therefore embarked upon a privatization programme under which Government corporations will be sold on the market, liquidated or integrated into Government ministries. In addition, the Government is undertaking an active investment promotion campaign to attract investors from within and from outside the country.

I wish to assure the Assembly that my delegation has closely followed the deliberations of this session, and we have found the experiences of other delegations very useful. We have also noted the crucial role that the United Nations is currently playing in the strengthening of the public administration systems of Member countries.

The Acting President: I now call on the Deputy Permanent Representative of Germany.

Mr. Henze (Germany): Many of the previous speakers have already stressed the importance of effective and efficient public administration for the promotion of a country's development and its prosperity. In the excellent documentation for this resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly, crucial aspects have been highlighted.

In the past few days we have been able to discuss the framework to be set by public administrations at all levels in order to achieve economic growth, vitality in the private sector, social development and the safeguarding of the environment.

Public administration has to be based on the rule of law and democracy. Transparency and accountability for all public institutions are essential in order to combat all forms of mismanagement and corruption, and thus to strengthen responsibility and solidarity in civil society.

In addition to our full endorsement of the statement made by Italy on behalf of the European Union, I would like to share the experiences Germany has had in the past five years, since reunification, in its struggle with the difficult task of reshaping public administration and with an economy in transition that suffered the loss of its major markets in Central and Eastern Europe.

Furthermore, I would also briefly like to introduce the main results of the Regional Conference on the Role of Public Administration in Promoting Economic Reform in Eastern and Central European Countries, which was held in January 1996 in Berlin, in preparation for this session of the General Assembly. Our experiences and those of our neighbour countries were the main reasons for the selection of this particular theme. We welcome the availability of the summary of the Conference report as a United Nations document.

Re-establishing, reorganizing, rebuilding and reshaping public administrations in the new federal States in the eastern part of Germany is an ongoing process. The transition from a centrally planned economy and a centralized public administration with the State directly involved in the production of goods and services, to a fully developed public and private sector is not easy to achieve; it takes time and is expensive.

The lessons learned so far have proved that without supportive and predictable administrative and legal structures at all levels, and without access to public services — particularly to a justice system — the private sector and citizens would live in a state of uncertainty and insecurity, hindering the development of their full potential.

Even more important are democratization and the participation of the people in the decision-making process of making decisions that are of immediate concern to them. Only free and fair elections can set up governments which are accountable to their citizens and committed to their well-being.

The second important element in the reconstruction of the eastern part of Germany has been the restructuring of all sectors of the economy. Privatization became the key to economic development. Since this task would have exceeded the capacities of the Government and its agencies, the Federal Government created the *Treuhandanstalt*, a trust fund charged with selling public companies and finding private buyers and investors, and provided with sufficient resources to assist the privatized companies in their efforts to achieve a sound economic and financial basis.

It is no secret that capacity-building at all levels and in all sectors of society in the eastern part of my country is still supported by a huge amount of public transfer payments, private investments and technical and personnel assistance. It is also true that, besides this resource flow from west to east, an increasing share of resources for investments, wages earned, taxes paid and products produced has been generated within the new Federal States themselves.

The will and ability of a population to shape its future are the prerequisites for success. If it does not mobilize its own resources, transfer payments are almost worthless and fail to have the intended impact.

Those experiences, which I have been able to describe only in very general terms, also became the basis for our cooperation with the countries in transition in Central and Eastern Europe. They were also among the reasons we supported the Regional Conference on the Role of Public Administration in Promoting Economic Reform in Eastern and Central European Countries, which took place in Berlin in January 1996. Allow me to give a brief summary of the main findings of that Conference.

There was agreement that reforms would have to cover a very broad range of areas, including civil service structures, the judicial system, tax legislation, management of public expenditures, administration audits, staff policies and training and the definition of the role of the private sector. The need for a diversity of national approaches and the merits of flexible, pragmatic and non-dogmatic policies of deregulation and privatization were emphasized. Participants also agreed that reforms require a long-term strategy, stability, coherence and consistency in the pursuit of change.

It is clear that the State will not wither away. But what is needed is a State with a strong democratic structure. A strong, proactive government is usually helpful, but not necessarily one that is big. It should be a government that can listen and communicate, with a civil service that is responsive and accountable, and whose decision-making processes are transparent and open to public participation and review.

The old "top-down" approaches are slowly being replaced by new patterns which follow the paths of de-concentration, decentralization and de-bureaucratization. Participants in the Conference were aware that drastic adjustments were not without danger, sometimes resulting in dysfunction and improper balances between the various levels of public administration or in brain-drains in the private sector, to name a just a few problems.

It was agreed that basic elements for the proper functioning of the private and public sectors are the establishment and protection of property rights and labour laws, the protection of citizens' rights against bureaucracies and the clear separation of responsibilities between the various levels of government.

The main findings of the Regional Conference in Berlin underline the fact that modernizing and reforming the administrative system of a State is an essential component of the economic, social and political transformation currently taking place in Eastern and Central European countries. Although these changes occurred in countries that are our immediate neighbours and were in many cases radical, we have always been aware of the fact that changes of a similarly radical nature took place in many countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia. In a great many of those countries the structural reforms necessary to promote economic and social development were difficult to bring about. They often required sacrifices which affected in particular the low-income groups of the population. But it has also become obvious in those areas that structural reforms must be accompanied by reforms in government and administration.

Germany has cooperated with many developing countries in their efforts to improve public administration. We have learned that such cooperation must take into account the special situation of each

country, as well as the established traditions of administrative systems. But one principle has proved to be applicable everywhere: decentralization can greatly enhance the efficient and effective use of human, social and economic resources.

Let me conclude by saying that we are convinced that our deliberations within the United Nations on the relationship between public administration and development will contribute to a better understanding of this complex problem in developing countries and countries in transition, as well as in the context of our joint cooperation for development.

The Acting President: I now call on Mr. Mehmet Atalay, Deputy Director-General, State Planning Organization of Turkey.

Mr. Atalay (Turkey): It is a privilege for me to address this Assembly on this important occasion. My statement will be distributed in its entirety, but because of time constraints I will limit myself to highlighting the main points.

Turkey has acquired a great deal of expertise and accumulated experience on development planning during the long time span from the 1960s to the 1990s. I would like to underline the fact that Turkey basically followed the indicative planning path. Parallel to transformations in global conditions, and on the basis of a broader understanding, planning in Turkey is increasingly gaining the characteristics of a participatory and consensus-building process, coordinating various economic and social policies.

The seventh five-year development plan, which was adopted by the Turkish Parliament in 1995, and which will cover the period from 1996 to 2000, is a product of these accumulated planning skills. The plan emphasizes policy-oriented, macro-level strategic issues and provides a vision for Turkey at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

Turkey is a dynamic developing country which underwent a structural transformation during the 1980s. After the 1980s, Turkey made significant progress towards establishing the principles and bases of an economy open to competition — liberalizing foreign trade, determining prices by market forces and restructuring and developing domestic financial markets. To complement this process, international capital movements were entirely liberalized in 1989. Restructuring efforts in the public sector were also continued in this period.

After 1980, considerable increases were recorded in the growth of gross national product, capacity utilization in the manufacturing industry, the volume of exports, the share of manufacturing industry in exports and the ratio of trade volume to gross national product.

Despite these developments in the 1980s, chronic high inflation, investment deficiencies in the industrial sector and, especially, the problems caused by the failure to realize structural change to enhance competitiveness in the public and private sectors have persisted. In this structural reform process, the need to link development with public administration and to redefine the role of the State have become pivotal issues.

I would like to share some of the views of my delegation on the report of the Secretary-General on public administration and development. The basic idea of the report on the twelfth meeting of the Group of Experts is that public administration and development are inseparable. The United Nations experts underline the changes in global development strategies and the global context which call for a new role for the State. Leadership by public administration and a strong emphasis on the "thinking" part of government are the other basic points of the report. All these points are in conformity with the Turkish perspective.

There is already a strong feeling on the part of the Turkish authorities that in the process of domestic and global changes, Turkey needs to define the role of the State and that of public administration. Privatization, the development of new markets, decentralization and reducing bureaucracy have all been among the priorities of Turkish Governments. These problems constitute an important part of Turkish development plans and annual programmes. The seventh five-year development plan puts a strong emphasis upon policy-oriented macro-level issues and contains 20 major legal and institutional reform projects. Among these reform projects, human resource development occupies a special place. There is also a reform project pertaining to the development of regulatory and supervisory functions of the State. Moreover, public services in general, and judicial and social security services in particular, are targeted as key areas to increase efficiency. Finally, there is a reform project for the strengthening of local administrations.

Turkey's report on its public administration approach in its five-year development plan, covering the period 1996-2000, is available to representatives.

It is clear that there is a global trend towards more participatory and transparent administration at every level of public administration. Decentralization and increasing the flexibility and accountability of the central administration have become pivotal issues. In that context, knowledge is becoming the crucial element for the successful and responsive organization and management of public agencies. In that regard, information technologies and quality staff are two indispensable elements. It is my strong belief that with a successful implementation of the aforementioned reform projects and with a commitment to modern information and management practices, Turkey will enter the twenty-first century in much better shape with respect to the quality of its public administration.

The United Nations Group of Experts has a broader perspective than experts focused on individual countries. I appreciate this macro-level perspective provided by the United Nations reports. However, general ideas are usually ineffective when it comes to implementing a reform programme in a specific country. In that regard, the United Nations should concentrate more on problem countries and try to produce case studies on practical concerns. As a vital part of this research, the United Nations experts should focus on the discovery of country-specific barriers before reform efforts.

It is my view that the United Nations should put more emphasis on country-specific requirements and solutions. In that context, one should emphasize the link between the role of the State and the level of development. This dynamic process requires a careful, context-based analysis so that each country can devise the most appropriate public administration system for its level of development.

As a final point, I would like to stress the importance of retrospective analysis of the United Nations reform efforts. If there is a well-done retrospective analysis, individual countries and United Nations experts alike will be more effective in their programmes. Such retrospective analysis would also shed light on future policies of the United Nations.

I would like to conclude by stressing that the United Nations is and will remain a key Organization in providing a global perspective to individual countries. It has been a pleasure for me to participate in this special United Nations meeting and to interact with my counterparts from all over the world. I am looking forward to seeing the fruits of these meaningful efforts in the very near future.

The Acting President: I now call on the representative of Kyrgyzstan.

Mr. Aitmatov (Kyrgyzstan): I would like to reaffirm the great importance the Kyrgyz Government attaches to this resumed session of the General Assembly on public administration and development. This is certainly a remarkable event, marking the first time the General Assembly has met to discuss specifically the question of public administration in development. Evidently, we have come to this stage at a time when the need for a fundamental review of the role of public administration and development is more urgent and apparent than ever.

We have carefully studied the reports of the Secretary-General and the Group of Experts and note gratefully that they draw due attention to the needs of countries with economies in transition. In common with other transition countries, Kyrgyzstan faces a major challenge in improving Government effectiveness across a wide range of functions. Along with adjusting its system of Government to the market-oriented economy and the process of democratization, the Kyrgyz Republic is engaged in building up and strengthening its new public institutions as a newly independent State. The Government is now challenged to implement these changes and, at the same time, to preserve the best features of those existing socio-economic structures which contribute to a stable society. There is a clear awareness among the State authorities that the success of the transition process and the performance of new systems depend on a reorientation and strengthening of management.

The public sector management system in Kyrgyzstan is evolving. Efforts have been made in this respect to combine native historical and political traditions with the experience of other countries channelled through the programmes of international agencies. Several structural reforms have already taken place — in particular, the number of ministries and State agencies has decreased by half.

A special unit within the President's office has been set up to address public sector reform and training. Its cooperation in this area with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, the European Union, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is considered to be one of the top priorities of the Government's foreign policy. UNDP,

through a management development project, works closely with the European Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) Programme and line ministries to provide public sector management training, addressing immediate needs. The UNDP training is delivered through the Bishkek International Management School in such a way as to create a sustainable institutional capacity in Kyrgyzstan that is responsive to the needs of the people.

Although public sector management policies have already been and continue to be developed, there is still an urgent need for training and retraining civil servants in the field. We should admit that the Government's administration and management system has not kept pace with the changes in the modern life of this society. With the earlier predominance of central planning, many administrators and managers were trained in technical skills, with almost no emphasis on policy analysis, evaluation or modern implementation methods. An important task at hand is that of building staff capacity and creating a modern performance- and people-oriented, professional and effective civil service.

With the central Government of Kyrgyzstan in the capital, provincial and local administration is a responsive form of government that complies with and implements directions from the top. Though there are no definite plans for extensive decentralization at this time, efforts are being made to upgrade the management capacity of the regional staff. This process has been developed locally and has incorporated many useful aspects of management planning.

But there is still a clear need for improved management skills in planning, budgeting, supervising, and coordinating development analysis, economic management and programme and project management at the local level. This could be achieved through the establishment of free extension centres of the Bishkek International Management School in the northern, southern, and central parts of the country. Further assistance for public administration training could be provided by promoting study tours in various countries that correspond to the transitional economic and administrative needs of Kyrgyzstan. These orientation tours for senior management would expose Kyrgyz officials to the countries' public sector management policies, systems, procedures and functions, as well as their distribution of responsibilities, problem-solving methods, performance appraisal systems and techniques. Our officials would be able to establish linkages with their corresponding agencies in other Governments and public sector training institutions.

We believe that the recommended public sector strategic management reviews would help our Government to map out new strategies and develop the appropriate process for establishing national priorities for development. It would be helpful for Kyrgyzstan to have advisory services provided by the United Nations programme in the following areas: information management and computers, financial management and financial institutions, tax policy and administration, government budgeting, accounting and auditing, and development of legislative and judicial systems.

Aid management and coordination are entirely new functions in Kyrgyzstan, and its needs in this field are considerable. The Government has welcomed cost-sharing contributions from the Government of Switzerland and perceives UNDP as the lead agency in this area.

Undoubtedly, natural disasters threaten development processes. Kyrgyzstan is particularly disaster-prone, and development results have been affected by the frequent incidence of disasters. The Kyrgyz Government would be grateful for the opportunity to participate in the global programme for the integration of public administration and the science of disasters.

Finally, I would like to stress that the Kyrgyz Government is fully aware of the fact that capacity-building in the public administrative system will require strengthening institutions so that they can perform better in all respects and at all levels. At the highest level, the administration must be responsive to changes in governing and efficient in anticipating long-term developments and in designing future-oriented strategies.

Since the United Nations now plays a proactive role in assisting Governments, we would like to support the inter-agency working group's recommendation, that all inter-agency programmes in public administration and finance should be coordinated. But the United Nations in particular is a clearing-house for experiences in public administration reform and innovation. Let it facilitate the sharing of experiences between Governments, and between agencies. At the same time, the focus of the United Nations programme should be action-oriented and directed to the practical needs of its Member States.

The Acting President: I now call on the Permanent Representative of Algeria.

Mr. Lamamra (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): In a world subject to ever faster-paced

developments and to in-depth transformations of the frameworks and viewpoints that shape and guide State action, our discussions here afford us a useful opportunity to stop and think together about how to clarify concepts and organizational patterns for public service to help Government authorities, with their numerous instruments, carry out effectively and economically their mission of governing in the best interests of the citizenry. Just as other developing countries have done, Algeria has ensured that its public administration has an essential role in the design and execution of its developmental effort.

Ever since its independence, Algeria's principal aim has been the establishment of the institutions that make up a solid State, a State that endures beyond the realm of events and individuals, a State that has been given the weighty task of laying the groundwork for an economic and social machinery geared towards recovering and fully developing the nation's wealth so as to meet the needs of its people.

One must acknowledge the indispensable and positive role played by the State in Algeria. Above and beyond the creation of a dense industrial network, the direct involvement of the State in economic management has made it possible for us to take on the considerable and manifold needs of a population deprived of essentials in the areas of education, health, jobs and housing and to set up an infrastructure even in the remotest corners of our vast territory.

This means the historical pre-eminence of the State in the development process has shaped the current economic and social landscape of our country, which is characterized by a State sector that generates over 60 per cent of our gross domestic product, and is also brought to bear on actions by the authorities relating to the problems of transition to a market economy.

This set of realities has led Algeria, committed as it is to a vast process of economic reform, to formulate and implement a development strategy which, while subjecting the economy to the laws of the marketplace, will ensure the necessary balance between the various State functions, tying the powers of the public authorities in the coordination of economic activity to the desire to preserve to the greatest extent possible a patrimony that has been built up through the colossal efforts of our national community, while encouraging free enterprise and private initiative.

In this context, the State seeks to modernize the kinds of measures taken by its public administration by gradually shifting its management and production actions towards a stronger public administration role in overseeing regulation and the proper functioning of economic mechanisms, in guaranteeing political and social stability and in protecting the most vulnerable sectors of society, in a spirit of social justice and rational solidarity.

Thus, the new set of challenges facing public administration and development involves less a weakening of the State than a refocusing of its mission and of the roles that it will henceforth have to play in different ways, but with the same objective: the promotion of the well-being of all of society. In the new legislative and institutional order of things that Algeria is in the process of setting up so that it can enter the market economy, State action takes the following directions: first, preserving macroeconomic stability and restarting economic growth by means of affirming the State's role in designing and implementing legislation and regulations for economic activity, which in the future is to be sustained by a variety of actors; secondly, achieving national consensus and cohesion within society while playing the role of arbiter to reconcile the interests of the various actors in a future open economy henceforth, in order to prevent the inevitable frustrations born of socio-economic upheaval from leading to social fragmentation and marginalization; and, thirdly, restructuring the presence of the State in the economic arena and its direct involvement in the national economic machinery by determining in which sectors it must remain involved and at what level, and those from which it must disengage, for the benefit of private initiative.

In the light of this experience in Algeria, and that in many other developing countries, we must tread carefully as we look at the question of the role of the State and, more particularly, of public administration in the process of national development. Need we recall in this connection the founding role played by the State in nation-building in certain third world countries, serving as the glue of national cohesion, as it continues to do in many of those countries?

The imperatives of reducing budget deficits and the desire to achieve operational efficiency shared by us all could not possibly be the basis for a universal conclusion favouring the diminishment of the State or the systematic dismantling of public administration at the cost of inviting the disruption of networks that provide structure and

sustenance to economic and social life in many developing countries.

In this connection, it is appropriate to take into account the diversity of situations prevailing in each country in economic, social, cultural and political terms to appreciate the effectiveness and efficiency of the administrative apparatus and then perhaps to suggest adjustments, since there cannot be just one analytical criterion or just one model for good administration. Each country must assess its own public administration on the basis of a certain number of parameters specific to it to: its historical heritage, the expectations of its people, its level of development, its social structure, its societal blueprint and so on. Nonetheless, if the risk of bureaucracy is everywhere, we must recognize that in many cases developing countries suffer less from an excess of administration than from a lack of administration. This phenomenon of "under-administration" has grown even worse under the impact of structural adjustment policies, particularly in certain African countries that have at times been compelled to shrink their administrative structures, which adversely affects the capability of public services to fulfil even minimal administrative functions and provide social services to populations, while drastically reducing State action in promoting development.

The recent African regional meeting on public administration and development, held from 25 March to 27 March 1996 in Namibia, on the subject of structural adjustment for greater government efficiency put its finger on this issue inn timely fashion. The view was taken that structural adjustment programmes have hurt the ability of Governments to formulate and implement appropriate development programmes and policies. Among the conclusions of the meeting, it was recommended that the public sector extend beyond merely budgetary considerations and seek instead to strengthen the capability of Governments to meet the expectations and the needs of the governed.

From this perspective, we appreciate the observations made by the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in his opening remarks as we began our work here on the priority to be given to strengthening the capability of Governments to play their roles and to enhance their effectiveness and efficiency. In this context, the Secretary-General pointed out the services the United Nations can offer the Member States, particularly developing countries, in this area.

Strengthened by the confidence of its Member States, which is based on its neutrality and impartiality of its actions, the United Nations and its various institutions can indeed play a significant role in improving public administration performance in developing countries. In fulfilling the various mandates assigned to it since its creation, the United Nations has striven to meet the needs expressed by the Member States, and we take pleasure in noting in this connection the account contained in the report submitted by the Secretary-General for this resumed session. It is important that this United Nations effort be pursued, strengthened and be adapted to the new needs arising from the spectacular political and economic changes of this day and age.

The key areas of our Organization's action were outlined by the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance at their twelfth meeting. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, the funds, the programmes and most especially the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), have already adopted their organizational structures to take these new needs into account, through the creation, first, of the Department for Development Support and Management Services and, secondly, through the adoption of a programme to promote administration and finances in the context of the United Nations medium-term plan for the period 1992-1996. These structures and the opportunities for assistance they afford should be better known to those Member States that could resort to their services.

It is thus to be hoped that this resumed session will contribute to synchronizing all initiatives taken within and outside the United Nations system and will stimulate fresh measures to help developing countries establish the kind of public administration that will meet expectations in terms of performance, fairness, efficiency, transparency and will be a positive force for the governed.

The Acting President: I now call on the Permanent Representative of Belarus.

Mr. Sychou (Belarus) (*interpretation from Russian*): First, allow me to express my gratitude to the Secretary-General for his detailed and comprehensive report (A/50/847) on the question of public administration and development. It must be acknowledged that the subject chosen for discussion in this resumed session of the General Assembly is a topical one, a source of great interest today for politicians, public officials,

businessmen, scientists and representatives of a broad sector of society.

Public administration has for centuries played a key role in the comprehensive development of society, and to a great extent its main functions in the State have not changed. It acts, first, as a conduit for relations between employers and workers; secondly, it creates conditions for the effective functioning of all aspects of the economy; and, thirdly, it creates a legislative and normative base, to regulate all spheres of society's activities. Thus, the State has real tools for shaping the development of society as a whole.

Of course, all countries, large and small, have their own traditions and invaluable experience in public administration. Credit should go to the organizers of this session for convening such a representative forum to exchange experience and achievements in the area of public administration and to determine the future role of the United Nations in this sphere.

The Government of Belarus has set itself the task of carrying out economic reforms to move from a planned economy to a socially oriented market economy. It would be no exaggeration to say that during the period of transition to established market relations and integration in the world economic system, the effectiveness of public administration is one of the key factors in successful reform in my country as a whole. This is why we attach such great importance to participation in the work of this resumed session.

Today in my country, reform of the public administration system is being carried out in the following ways: the adoption of economic means of stimulating production and business activities; the restructuring of the national economic sector, with emphasis on leading edge and high technology sectors; reform of the banking sector; the creation of conditions for stimulating long-term capital investment and for attracting direct foreign investment to modernize industrial enterprises and to create competitive new market structures; reform of the system of social protection for citizens; and so on.

Over the last two years these measures have already made it possible to achieve certain positive results. In particular, the stringent monetary and fiscal policies being pursued in the Republic, together with support from entrepreneurs, has made it possible to lower the level of inflation from 30 per cent to 40 per cent a month to 3 per cent to 4 per cent at the start of this year. It is possible to talk about controlling inflation through economic methods. Its reduction, together with other measures, has made it possible to halt a loss of value in revolving funds, had a positive impact on the economy and reduced interest rates for credit. Export enterprises have figured actively in this, and total exports of the Republic increased in 1995 compared with 1994 by more than 70 per cent, reaching $4 billion.

For the first time in the last few years there has been a halt to the catastrophic drop in the population's real salaries and real monetary income. Growth rates in salaries and the consumer price index of 1995, in comparison with 1994, stood at 94.4 per cent. According to government predictions of socio-economic development of the Republic for 1996, the gross domestic product will be R 178 trillion to R 180 trillion, which is 100 per cent to 101 per cent of the 1995 figure. The average monthly rate of inflation should stand at about 2.5 per cent. Gross agricultural production is expected to increase by 1.5 per cent to 2 per cent. Total exports in 1996 will increase by 8.5 per cent.

In carrying out its tasks, the Government of the Republic of Belarus is experiencing serious difficulties, chiefly due to the huge shortage of qualified management personnel with a knowledge of leading technology and approaches to State administration in a market economy. Another destabilizing factor is the brain-drain of qualified people, particularly of public officials, to the private sector. Strengthening the potential of State administration is therefore a priority for Belarus in international technical cooperation. Expert advice is that about 30 per cent of the needs of the Republic can be met in this area — personnel training, transfer of high technology, management. In this connection, we should note the positive experience of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the use of the system of national projects for technical assistance, which makes it possible to train national experts and management personnel to meet international standards.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe also made a great contribution by giving consultative and advisory assistance on a broad range of questions to countries in transition. In particular, it has given us a great deal of help in modernizing the energy sector and improving national transport policy. We must also note the long-term and effective cooperation of Belarus with the International Labour Organisation, which regularly sends specialists to Minsk to advise on improving Belarus labour legislation and bringing it into

line with the requirements of market and production relations.

We are developing a useful interaction with international financial groups and the World Bank. As a result, over the last two years the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has made a contribution of more than $270 million in the form of two long-term loans, and there have also been loans from the World Bank amounting to $170 million. In addition, the Belarus Government is working on a programme of measures to lead the economy out of a crisis, and that programme has been provisionally agreed to by the IMF.

The programme provides for a broad range of measures, whose implementation is already yielding positive results. In the second half of the year we have seen a significant reduction in the level of inflation. In the area of taxation and budget policy, there have been indications that the budget deficit may be eliminated; it is forecast to fall from a level of 3.2 per cent in 1995 to 2.6 per cent. Following the recommendations of the IMF, the Government of Belarus has pursued a gradual increase in compensation payments for housing and communal services, and we are working together for a mechanism for social protection.

We hope that successful cooperation with bodies of the United Nations system to improve public administration, in order to ensure stable economic development and a speedy transitional period by the States of Central and Eastern Europe, will continue and intensify.

We believe that the General Assembly could help to disseminate the positive experience of organizations giving technical assistance to countries in transition to improve and develop public administration — not just specialized agencies in the United Nations system concerned with the economic area. We are sure that this session will make it possible to find additional resources in the United Nations for this matter. I am confident that this session will make a substantial contribution to the search for new ways to enhance the efficiency of public administration and development for all Member States.

The Acting President: I now call on Mr. Diallo Amadou Ousmane, Adviser on Organization and Management of Public Administration to the Prime Minister of Mauritania.

Mr. Ousmane (Mauritania) (*interpretation from French*): I wish first to thank the United Nations for having resumed the fiftieth session of the General Assembly to consider the question of public administration and development, a subject of great concern to our Organization, since administration and development are closely linked to the lives of people.

Public administration in Mauritania, as in most developing countries, was confronted after its independence with the need to build a national State. We had to organize civil society rapidly and put in place the appropriate structures to deal with the burdens assumed by the State in order to establish national sovereignty and ensure public order and the security of persons and property.

Due to a lack of national capital and the virtual non-existence of private savings, we then had to take hold of the key sectors of the economy by establishing new financial, trade and production institutions.

As the chief employer and decision maker on economic activity and the instrument for the redistribution of wealth and the fruits of development, the State thus found itself the chief engine of development, assuming both the functions of public authority and of production.

This involvement of the State in production activities, together with other factors — particularly the drought of the 1970s, the collapse of the mining sector and the deterioration of terms of trade — led the country into serious economic difficulties.

By way of responding to this situation, since 1985 the Government has set up, with the help of our development partners, a vast programme of structural adjustment that is now being pursued in economic policies for the period of 1992-1996.

In this context, in order to achieve the goal of ending the State's involvement, the adjustment was supported by a policy of decentralization and of institutional development focused on modernizing administration and the establishment of a pluralistic democracy.

The dynamics of the adjustment begun in 1985 set before Mauritania the problem of redefining the role of the State, an essential question in the debate on public administration and development, which is the subject of this session.

Our experience in Mauritania is based on the conviction that the firm establishment of democracy in developing countries is a need that is met through a deep-going renovation of the State. We believe that there can be no democracy without a state of law, nor a state of law without an administration that is imbued with a sense of public service, values the role of citizens and is attentive to their expectations.

Thus, the State, while consolidating its traditional role as public authority, will, in its task of regulating and managing economic activity, have to develop new areas of partnership with economic agents and basic development agents — local collectives, businesses and other members of civil society. This means that the State must adapt itself to the needs of a development process in which the citizen is an actor or, better yet, a partner.

In line with these ideas and with the plan set out by His Excellency Mr. Maaouya Ould Sid' Ahmed Taya, President of Mauritania, we launched a new policy of disengaging the State from the production sector. This was done by setting up a code of investment incentives and a programme for privatizing State companies and improving public enterprises. We then proceeded to liberalize trade and exchange.

The institutional apparatus was reorganized in various ways. The renewed decentralization at the level of urban and rural communes — a total of 208 in the entire national territory — formed the framework for basic development. A new Constitution was approved by plebiscite in 1991. Authorized political parties, a pluralistic press and a bicameral legislature became operational. The main decision-making centres were strengthened by giving them the instruments for planning, programming, following up and monitoring governmental actions.

A new management policy for State personnel was designed and implemented. This new policy is aimed at managing public service personnel and monitoring the payroll. It establishes transparency in recruitment through competition based on common law, and professional training as a way of maximizing human resources, and merit-based rewards as a fair system of incentives.

The reorganization of the institutional apparatus has also addressed financial management, which is being strengthened through the reorganization of the structures in the Ministry of Finance, in particular the customs, taxation and public debt sectors. At the technical and decision-making levels, public authorities and private sector managers are coordinating their activities.

The social policies put in place have made it possible to raise the rate of school attendance in basic education to over 76 per cent, while improving the quality of education, ensuring health care coverage and primary health care and promoting the affordability of pharmaceutical products for persons of modest means.

A broad programme is being implemented for the protection of children and their mothers. Electricity and communications are progressively being made available to populations in both urban and rural areas. Networks of roads and ports are being constructed and/or renovated. A national environmental council has been created; national non-governmental organizations have been authorized, and some of them have become operational. Lastly, a national environment fund is being created.

Mauritania continues to step up its efforts to develop an administration for development. This is why we welcome the growing interest the international community has been giving to developing countries, the Maastricht conference on Africa and the special initiative of the current session of the General Assembly devoted to a topic that lies at the heart of our concerns.

This concerted interest in public administration and its role in development will make it possible for us to achieve better coordination with the actions of our development partners. This attention will certainly yield better results if the mobilization of resources makes it possible to improve the absorption capacities of our countries, and this improvement will come through a better identification and organization of our needs and through the strengthening of our capacities to develop, implement and assess our development programmes. In this respect, the private sector must be involved in the process of formulating, following up and evaluating development policies and programmes.

Cooperation should be established between the public and private sectors to harness and utilize the flow of information.

Technical assistance should play a supporting role in the implementation of programmes through an effective transfer of competence and know-how, thus enhancing national expertise, which is a key element in the task of stewarding development.

We shall strengthen our capacity by increasing managerial training measures, through strengthened programmes at civil service training institutions. In this context, we envisage opening training schools for civil servants in the private sector and having civil servants spend time working in private enterprise; conversely, private sector workers will spend time in public administration and training schools to gain an insight into the culture of public service and current regulations and procedures. Furthermore, the major State training schools and their counterparts in the private sector will be able to provide management training for the public and private sectors.

With regard to partnership, the State could call on private enterprise to finance or co-finance, manage or co-manage, public projects and services. It could also transfer the management of public services to local administrative bodies, such as non-governmental organizations, associations or agencies, or to local districts, taking account of specific local circumstances and factors.

Regional cooperation, promoting the pooling of resources and the search for appropriate solutions, would respond to the challenges of sustainable development.

Before concluding, I would like to make a positive contribution to this fiftieth session of the General Assembly by commending the adoption of a resolution by which the Assembly does two things. First, we recognize the important role of public administration in development and commit Member States to including reform of public adminstration in their national development plans and to placing national structures dealing with the reform of the civil service at a sufficiently high governmental level to enable them to act more effectively and carry out the desired changes.

Secondly, we aim to take advantage of the potential for personnel training, study and expertise offered by national and inter-community bodies such as the *Institut international d'administration publique (IIAP)*, the *Ecoles Nationales d'administration (ENA)*, the *Observatoire des Functions Publiques Africaines (OFPA)*, and the International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS), and the competent organs of the United Nations system and the World Bank, making them the framework for technical and financial assistance to meet the needs clearly defined by States, in accordance with the necessary development of national expertise.

The Acting President: I call on Mr. Vianney Shumbusho, Director of the Office of the Minister of Public Administration of Rwanda.

Mr. Shumbusho (Rwanda): On behalf of the Government and people of Rwanda, I am grateful for this opportunity to share our experience of rebuilding our public administration after this century's brutal genocide.

I would like to reiterate the comments of previous speakers, that good governance brought about by effective and efficient public administration is a *conditio sine qua non* for the development of any country.

The history of Rwanda has been characterized by internal conflicts, which culminated in the recent war and the catastrophic genocide of 1994. The immediate consequences of this were the destruction of approximately one seventh of the population, the majority of whom were in the productive labour force; the destruction of infrastructure and equipment, both public and private; the collapse of institutions, including the civil service, judiciary and local administration, to mention but a few; a severe setback in economic activity, particularly agriculture and industrial activities; the exodus of between 1 million and 2 million people to neighbouring countries as refugees; a spontaneous and demanding inflow of former refugees from neighbouring countries; and a surviving population which was visibly incapacitated, traumatized, demoralized and de-motivated.

Amid all these problems, the Government of National Unity installed on 19 July 1994 was faced with the daunting challenge of rehabilitating and rebuilding a war-ravaged economy, reviving the provision of basic social services to a traumatized population, coping with the wreckage of genocide, stabilizing a fragile political alliance, and consolidating internal peace and security, as well as warding off looming military threats from exiled soldiers of the former regime.

On the other hand, the Government was faced with crippling obstacles, in the form of a treasury that had been emptied and swept clean by the ousted regime; the threat from regrouped elements of the defeated army of the former regime; a completely decimated public service; and interference by hostile foreign Governments associated with the defeated former regime.

The new regime, armed with courage, hope and commitment, has embarked on rebuilding the public service. The initial phase of this reconstruction in the

public service has been characterized by emergency, ad hoc responses to the crises of post-genocide administration. Fortunately, we believe that the emergency phase is now approaching its end. It is time to reflect, rebuild, reshape and redirect the public service to meet the challenge of the next phase of rebuilding the nation. This is the central theme of this statement on public administration and development.

I should like to refer first to the problems of the current public service. At the end of the recent war, the former regime fled the country. The political elite, its army and the bulk of the civil servants took off. Having planned, executed and participated in the genocide, they feared facing the consequences of their heinous actions, and fled to neighbouring countries. They also persuaded a large segment of the peasantry to flee with them.

As a consequence, Rwanda has an entirely new civil service work force. While it was relatively easy to fill the lower levels of the public service, the middle and senior levels were difficult to fill. The recruitment was ad hoc, and as a result there is now an imbalance in the different levels. The bottom is bulging because of the overemployment of unskilled staff. The middle level, for professional and technical personnel, is understaffed. The senior levels of directors have recently recruited staff with the required education but without adequate managerial experience.

The emerging public service is made up of civil servants with diverse backgrounds who acquired their skills in neighbouring countries during the diaspora. In the long run, the blending of these diverse backgrounds will produce a public service enriched by cross-pollination. In the short term, there is a need to harmonize and manage the differences. Some of the civil servants who have been recruited have the necessary educational background and management experience. Some have the educational qualifications but no managerial experience. Some are steeped in the Anglophile tradition, while others are a product of the francophone tradition derived from the Belgian colonization and from post-independence French influences.

The inherited public service practices are rooted in patrimonialism. Past regimes accepted and encouraged systems of recruitment, promotion and transfer of public servants on the basis of personal, political and kinship criteria. Ministers appointed staff in the public service, and if Ministers changed, public servants also changed.

This system ensured loyalty to the Ministers, but not competence to render services cost effectively. When the new Government came in, it attempted to introduce a system of public service recruitment based on merit. This meant the appointment of public officers based on competence measured in terms of specific qualifications and experience.

The old system had not required the establishment of specific posts for the performance of particular tasks. The new system, based on merit, requires that job specifications be determined, which in turn requires certain qualifications and experience. It is to be expected and normal that there should be tension between old wine and new wine, between the legacy of recruitment based on kinship and recruitment based on merit and professionalism.

The three problems faced by the public service which I have identified — massive flight of public service personnel; the need to blend the experiences of new civil servants; and the tension between the old system of political recruitment and the new standards of merit recruitment — can be said to be unique to Rwanda.

Most African public services have experienced a brain drain, but not on the scale experienced in Rwanda; most African public services cope with the absorption of returning exiles, but not on the scale being witnessed in Rwanda; and most African public services have to deal with kinship influences on recruitment, but, unlike in Rwanda, merit is an entrenched standard.

The Rwandan public service has some other problems, which are generic to the African public service; they are common features of most African public services. I refer to a large and unwieldy structure; extremely low salaries and wages; and low levels of productivity in the public service. While these features may be tolerated by the old regimes that produced them, new regimes with a mandate to rehabilitate, rebuild and develop soon realize that the inherited public service is a blunt tool incapable of being used to achieve their objectives.

If the ambitious rehabilitation and development programmes of the Rwandan Government are to be achieved, it is imperative to reshape public service and transform it into a reliable weapon in the fight against poverty, disease and ignorance. If the current public service is to be transformed in the right way, it is essential to understand its weaknesses and to construct a

vision of the future public service: that is, to replace it. If this vision of the future public service is properly articulated, performance in public service will be enhanced.

A vision of our future public service is simple and clear. If it is to guide behaviour it should stand out and shine like the stars on the horizon that guided the three wise men. The review of the current public service points to six stars in the vision of the future public service, as follows.

First, the Rwandan public service should be small, cost-effective and rational. Secondly, it should be driven by clearly articulated missions and objectives. Thirdly, appointments within the Rwandan civil service will take cognizance of past discrimination against women in Rwandan society and will aim to promote appropriately qualified women at all levels of the public sector. Fourthly, appointments to the Rwandan public service will be made on a meritocratic basis, without regard to race, ethnicity, gender, religion or other identity. The public service will provide adequate pay and compensation to highly motivated and competent workers. They will be creative, and innovative problem-solvers. Fifthly, the Rwandan public service should be imbued with an ethic of service to the people, to aim to eradicate poverty, promote social welfare and democratization and raise standards of living. It should be customer-driven, flexible and decentralized, to maximize responsiveness to the needs of the people. Sixthly, all activities of the Rwandan public service should be carried out in a transparent manner and should be accountable to democratic structures, and ultimately to the people of Rwanda. It should be neutral and impartial and should serve the Government of the day with diligence and without regard to political or other allegiances.

We have identified a 10-point plan to reform and reshape the public service and to direct it towards the vision of a highly motivated, productive, responsive and accountable service. The measures proposed are: rehabilitating training centres; designing and conducting training programmes; retooling and re-equipping at the minimum level; designing staff welfare programmes; revising the Public Service Statute; rationalizing public service structures and functions; modernizing personnel records and information systems; designing salaries and wages; introducing results-oriented management; and training women managers and increasing the participation of women in management.

Apart from restructuring the public service, the Government of National Unity has been busy consolidating national security, identifying the agents of genocide and resettling its dislocated and displaced persons. It should be realized that the ghosts of genocide are hanging over Rwanda like a fog. Unless this fog is cleared, the vision to solve the issues of development will remain blurred. A large number of those suspected of genocide are being held in jails originally intended for a smaller number. The institutional machinery for dispensing justice was destroyed during the war. The International Tribunal set up to identify agents of genocide living abroad has not been effective, as it has been crippled by organizational, financial and operational obstacles.

In spite of all the problems, the Rwandan judicial system is being rehabilitated. In order to hasten the judicial process, a Bill was recently presented to Parliament which divided suspected agents of genocide into four categories. Those who masterminded the genocide will get a death sentence, whereas the poor peasants who were led to kill their neighbours will walk off with lighter sentences, provided they show remorse for their heinous crimes.

My Government would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the international community who are assisting it to rehabilitate its judicial system, as well as those arresting suspected agents of genocide who fled to their countries — for example, Cameroon and Zambia.

The return of all refugees has been and still is the primary objective of the Government. Top government leaders, including the Prime Minister, have visited refugee camps in neighbouring countries to reassure refugees that all is well back home, that their security will be guaranteed and that they will be able to repossess their property. Some jobs in the civil service have even been reserved for the returning refugees. These efforts are, however, being sabotaged by the former leaders, most of whom are suspected of committing the genocide.

In conclusion, I want to say that the Ministry of Public Service, which is responsible for spearheading the innovation and strengthening the country's public administration, has always tried its best to live up to its mandate since the war and the genocide. While effective public administration is an essential instrument for managing the post-war Rwanda, the administrative machinery has been the major victim of the traumatic events of 1994.

There is thus a need to restore and strengthen public administration capacities to ensure a civil service that is

responsible to the needs of the people and provides quality service. Rwanda's public service needs to be efficient, competent and responsible to the Rwandese people and should support sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

The efforts being made by our country in this direction are not enough by themselves; hence the importance of international cooperation in supporting our own efforts in capacity-building in public administration for development.

The activities undertaken within the framework of the United Nations programme in public administration for enhancing the efficiency of our country's civil service are very important. Since the internal capacity of our public sector has been a casualty of war and genocide, external assistance is a necessity, and we call upon the United Nations system to redouble its efforts in providing this assistance.

The Acting President: I call on Mr. Imre Verebelyi, Government Commissioner for Public Administration of Hungary.

Mr. Verebelyi (Hungary): It is a great pleasure for me to be able to attend this resumed session of the General Assembly to share our experiences in the field of public administration and development.

As the Assembly knows, Hungary is a European country with a system in transition. During the past half decade our public administration served when there was a radical change of regimes. The radical change in 1989 and 1990 from the former centralized, one-party system was an administrative revolution rather than a simple administrative reform. This revolution focused on the changes in the basic functions, role and structure of public administration. The institutional side of public administration was underlined and emphasized, while the operational side was pushed into the background. We developed the basic framework of the legal and democratic State, but sometimes we forgot the operational and managerial side of public administration.

During the change of regime, in the so-called administrative revolution, Hungary became the first among those countries in Central and Eastern Europe facing similar historic challenges to establish a new type of local and central public administration and government, which received its legitimacy from democratic elections. The new system of central government and local self-government appropriately supported the fast development of the bases of the market economy and the rule of law. However, experience of the operation of the new system over the past five years has revealed several deficiencies which will have to be corrected sooner or later.

One of the main deficiencies is that the basic framework of the new system was not developed with precision, as a result of Hungary's lack of experience and time for preparation. Within the new framework, a detailed revision of the tasks of the State and local government has not been completed. Insufficient attention has been paid to simplifying administrative procedures, improving the efficiency of administration, reducing bureaucratic procedures and strengthening control mechanisms.

The quality of administrative work has not been improved, because experts with the highest skills have left the civil service and little attention has been paid to the training of remaining personnel and new civil servants. In order to correct these deficiencies and to prepare for the new tasks of the new century, the Hungarian Government has started an overall administrative reform which defines long-term objectives and sets goals for the short run as well.

After carrying out the tasks of the administrative revolution in Hungary, we are now preparing a reform of public administration, focusing mainly on the managerial aspects. New emphasis is placed on such managerial questions as simplification, reducing bureaucracy and entering the marketplace, as well as result-oriented and performance-evaluated public management.

I should like to underline that strengthening the managerial side of public administration does not mean neglecting either the legal or the democratic aspects, which are very important too. It seems to me that some overseas writers sometimes overemphasize and exaggerate the managerial side of public administration, while some European writers exaggerate the legal and democratic sides. Hungary's opinion is that all three aspects of public administration — the managerial, legal and democratic — are very important and can be harmonized.

As regards the long-term objectives of the Hungarian reform, public administration should be reduced, while its effectiveness and quality are strengthened to be able to complete social and economic missions successfully. To be effective, public

administration should achieve the required results at the lowest possible cost, instead of operating for its own bureaucratic purposes. High quality can be secured if skilled and reliable civil servants can meet not only the professional requirements, but also the demands of democratically changing politicians and the needs of the clients of administration as well.

In the first phase of the Hungarian reform, public administration should be reduced according to the different sectoral needs. We prefer a differentiated reduction. This means generally reducing administrative tasks, organization and personnel, while increasing them where this is reasonable and necessary. So both reductions and increases are needed in Hungary.

Processes for integrating and coordinating organizations should be completed; in Hungary necessary functions, especially the control functions of the Government, should be strengthened in the future. The first steps towards improving effectiveness and quality of public administration should be taken. This will require the well-organized training and education of civil servants, preparing them for crisis management and European integration.

The long-term and short-term objectives of Hungarian reform can be reached by several different methods. I should like to mention only two types: administrative methods and market-economy methods.

Administrative methods include revision and reduction of programmes and personnel; deregulation and regulatory reform; decentralization, deconcentration and centralization together, not alone or against each other; coordination and integration of administrative organizations; and better organization of administrative work and information systems.

The market-economy solutions and methods which are used in the private sector, and which can be adopted within the public administration, should also be used as additional and supporting methods. These market-type mechanisms are not the main means of reforming public administration, but only support it. They include cost-benefit analysis, contracting out, privatization, concessions and wider use of service charges and so on.

The draft of the wide-ranging preparations for the reform of the Hungarian public administration is being discussed by interested organizations of the public administration, professional and academic institutions and administrative experts. Multi-party discussions are also taking place regarding the long-term consequences and importance of administrative reform. If we are to have stable administrative reform, we must organize a multi-party consensus, covering not only the current Government, but of Governments over a longer period.

Hungary shares the views expressed by the overwhelming majority of delegates, and we are in broad agreement with the recommendations put forward. My delegation fully agrees with the draft resolution, mainly because it contains timely and well-balanced proposals, many of which are also in concord with the major trend of Hungary's 21 own reform programme proposals.

I will not read out those 21 proposals now, as they will be made available tomorrow morning.

The Acting President: I now call on the Permanent Representative of Malta.

Mr. Cassar (Malta): Malta welcomes this resumed session to discuss the item of public administration in development. This meeting underlines the important role that public administrations play in promoting economic growth and sustainable development. Efficiency in the public administrative and financial management capacities ensures a civil service that effectively responds to the achievement of the broader social goals and the individual needs of our citizens.

Malta also welcomes the consolidated report of the Secretary-General (A/50/847); the report of the Group of Experts (A/50/525); the outcome of regional meetings in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Central and Eastern Europe; and the 1994 Tangier Declaration of the Pan-African Conference of Ministers of the Civil Service, which gave impetus for the holding of this session.

Unprecedented global, political, economic and technological change has had a wide-ranging impact on the international community as a whole and on each of our societies and their peoples. Public administration is not immune to this process, nor should it be alien to it.

Though there may be characteristics which are specific to the national communities within which we operate, there are undoubtedly numerous other issues, problems and concerns which we share.

Within this context, the United Nations role as a clearing-house and service-oriented catalyst assisting Governments in improving their public management capacities to generate and disseminate global information and experience is pivotal. The contributions of the United Nations Department for Development Support and Management Services are commendable, as is its programme emphasizing the four essential components of public sector management: governance and administrative capacity; public finance and resource mobilization; management of the development programmes under national execution; and the partnership between public and private sectors.

Addressing Malta's Public Service Senior Management Conference earlier this year, my Prime Minister, Dr. Edward Fenech Adami, underlined the importance which the Malta Government continues to attach to the public service reform launched in 1987 and successfully implemented since.

In view of your appeals for shorter interventions, Mr. President, we are making available to delegations a paper on the public service reform in Malta, which forms an integral part of our statement and which we request to be included in the records of this resumed session.

I will only briefly outline here the common experience which we share with other States — namely, the different phases of transition to which our public service has had to adjust over the years.

Malta's public service played a key role in Malta's transition from colony to statehood after the attainment of independence on 21 September 1964. Though a service designed for a different society and limited to the specific areas assigned by the colonial administration, Malta's public service gave its contribution to the development of the new State by providing continuity in certain vital domestic sectors and in the setting up of new services, including that of foreign affairs.

More importantly, and pertinent to our theme today, is the enthusiasm with which the public service responded to the challenge of converting Malta's economy from one based on the presence of the military base to one based on industry, tourism, commercial ship repair and agriculture. This phase of economic change was accompanied by reform in other sectors. In most instances the public service found itself being instrumental in the execution of reform policies and a subject itself of the impact which these reforms had on Maltese society as a whole.

Thus the creation of career opportunities in the new economic sectors brought about a change in the perception with which a career in the public service was viewed. Equally, reform, investment and the opening of new opportunities in secondary, technical and tertiary education began to have an impact on the quality of human resources available to the service. During this time certain reform programmes were also introduced into the service. However, these reforms concentrated primarily on pay, grading and classification, and conditions of service. In hindsight, it is evident that they were lacking in the vital sphere of institution-building, a need which was then less evident.

The second phase in Malta's post-independence development saw a growth in Government's direct intervention in the economy with the setting up of a number of parastatal industries and an intensification of regulation. Both of these developments had an impact on the public service, both with regard to the widened powers entrusted to the public service and the impact which an increased Government share in the economy had on opportunities in the private sector. These factors, coupled with other factors of institutional and social stress, increased pressure on the public service and influenced its capacities.

With the change in Administration in 1987, the present Government instituted a broad programme of political, social and economic reform based on the principles of reconciliation, solidarity and subsidiarity, and accession to the European Union. It is within this context that one has to view the current reform programme, which recognizes the public service as a separate, albeit subordinate, institution of the State, with its own ethic of service, sense of professional identity and unambiguous vision of its role in the Maltese polity.

Ineffective control and accountability mechanisms, constant criticism, insufficient management development and an exodus of the best staff to the private sector had left the civil service neglected and demoralized. In early 1988 the Government established the Public Services Reform Commission and the Operations Review, which were mandated to review the public service and propose methods for its renewal and regeneration.

Four major impact areas were identified: the public service as an institution within the governance of Malta, and not as a group in isolation; building on the existing strengths of the service and restoring its institutional fabric; institutionalizing the process of change; and

institutionalizing leadership, its renewal and its development and effective exercise.

The objectives set out in the reform agenda were inseparable and were recognized as such. Progress towards the attainment of each depended on progress towards the attainment of the others. Implementation could not be piecemeal. It had to be a holistic approach which took into account the broad reforms in economic and social decentralization, the development of new service sectors and increased access to tertiary education.

Many of the initiatives undertaken underline the scale and magnitude of the task embarked upon and are common to the experience which other States share with us. These included the rethinking of existing organizational structures and the introduction of role delineation; the revision of existing legislation and the introduction of new legislation to reflect subsidiarity; the introduction of an information technology infrastructure; sustained development initiatives in management of change and business re-engineering; the setting up of local Government to enhance citizen empowerment; the revamping of human resources practices and procedures; the new salary structure, which reduced 96 pay scales to 20; and the introduction of a code of ethics for all public officers.

The profile given to the reform initiative created high expectations amongst public officers, constituted bodies, the business community and the citizens at large. Reform results were expected to come within a relatively short span of time, generating tremendous pressure for instant delivery. This process must necessarily be viewed as evolutionary, not instant, particularly since these change initiatives are all taking place alongside the ordinary administrative running of the public sector and not independently of it.

Redirecting human effort is a key factor during the transition from the old to the new. Managing behavioural issues became one of the more complex challenges. There is no easy way to reform. Change invariably involves a review of established values and ways. Inevitably, resistance is encountered. The precarious balancing act of maintaining momentum for change on this scale whilst simultaneously dealing with the management and day-to-day administration of the organization may prove to be the greatest challenge of all.

Together with the public service in the rest of the international community, our public service is already facing the formidable challenges of the revolution in communications and information technology. Government has made massive investment both in providing the necessary infrastructure and in the provision of training. In this instance the major obstacle to be overcome could be that of mentalities adjusting to future shock.

Motivation, partnership and achievement are the driving forces of reform, both within States and amongst the public services of the Member States of the United Nations.

This generation of public service has been exposed more than any of its predecessors to close cooperation between the services. This development is brought about not only by the globalization of the economy and the revolution in communications, but also by the closer association between States in coordinating their policies to achieve global targets ranging from the eradication of certain diseases to ensuring adequate nourishment for infants and children; from combating international drug trafficking to controlling the flow of armaments; and from a unification of statistics and standards to the promotion of world peace.

In all these diverse areas, our public services must cooperate. My country has actively involved itself in these and other areas of international cooperation. In the process of accession to the European Union we are involved in structured dialogue in different sectors. In our association with Commonwealth members, we are sharing not only the heritage of a common past but also the challenges of the future. In this respect, Malta is honoured to be hosting the 1996 Biennial Conference of the Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management, later this month.

My Government views these initiatives in the same spirit as that in which it views its efforts at reform within the public service at home: a spirit nurtured by a renewed will to revamp and consolidate the notion of service; a spirit inspired by a vision of a better world for future generations as we approach the year 2000.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.